Common Core Literacy Assignment

Discovering Connections in Literacy Fundamentals between Language and Music.

Who: Our choral ensemble will combine with an English class as we explore music literacy.

Learning goal: Our visiting students (the English class) will have a better understanding of what it means to be musically literate, some of the strategies currently used, and perform some examples.

Literacy Objective:

* + [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.2a](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/11-12/2/a/) Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

Define: What is Literacy? The ability to read and write

Opening statement: Today we will discuss what it means to be musically literate.

Current research tells us that all new knowledge must be attached to prior knowledge in order for us to retain a new concept. Therefore, let’s discuss the components of literacy that pertain to language. For example, alphabet, words, the meaning of the words, sentence structure, etc. What might these elements be in music? [Allow student response] Some answers may be: rhythm, pitch, score reading, good ears, etc.

Rhythm - is the occurrence of sounds organized over time.

\*horizontal orientation

Pitch – frequency, or how “high” or “low” the sound is

\*vertical orientation

\*The literate musician, much like with language, has to think on different levels (horizontal and vertical) in order to realize notated music (this could be linked to understanding the meaning of a given text and not just recognizing the letters, words, etc.

Music notation started back during the Middle ages and was done so by the clergy.

\*Discuss neumes, 4-lined staff, etc.

How does one learn music literacy? Much like young children who are capable of communicating prior to becoming literate (being able to read and write), the same applies to music; many children posses a vocabulary of songs prior to writing and reading musical notation. What are the steps?

1. First, we sing for joy. Without a love for singing, there is little want to learn the language.
2. Build tonal patterns
3. Using the “you are what you eat mindset,” we must fill the brain with commonly

Used tonal patterns. (start by using a call and response format). Demonstrate with students.

1. We have systems designed to build literacy skills
2. Solfege
3. Hand-signs
4. Rhythm [Bt., div., sub. Div] ; basic takadimi

Put it together.

1. Read a basic melody using the discussed systems

Is it important to be literate in the language that you most commonly speak? Why?

\*Consider how many professionals that you know who are illiterate?

Is it important for musicians to be literate? Why, or why not?

There are professional singers who do not have the skills to read music well. Therefore, it is possible to have success and to know almost nothing about literacy.

However, if you’re planning on going to college for music, then basic literacy competency is often assessed at the audition. Or, if you can’t read music, then you will always need other people to teach you the music. Even if you rely on an existing recording, how do you know if it’s right? Or, let’s say that you want to learn a new song that has never been recorded. If you can’t read music, how would you learn the piece. Additionally, I’ve been in situations where music was given to me at the last minute and performed the same day. Luckily, I can read well enough to perform said music with little experience. And thank goodness, because I didn’t have the time to find someone else to teach me the music, or the time to memorize it.

In short, there are ways to have success without possessing proficient literacy skills, but you will always be limited by your lack of skills. Music is a highly competitive market and any deficiency could lead to you NOT getting the job; meaning, the job could go to someone who is more well=rounded.

Observe a typical vocal score with four parts, a piano score.

Reflection:

1. What connections can be made between language and music literacy?
2. What does it mean to be literate?
3. Is it important to be musically literate? Literate in your main language?
4. Pick one other profession, craft, or art, and write a short paragraph on what you think it means to be literate in that area? (i.e. plumbing, attorney, nurse, farmer, professional football player, etc.).